

Arizona Military Museum Courier

Arizona National Guard Historical Society, Inc. DBA Arizona Military Museum
Spring 2015 Issue 42



"Lest We Forget"

The Arizona Military Museum is a combined humanities project of history, art, and prose and has been recognized with numerous awards for its accomplishments. Its mission is to honor and enhance the appreciation of the military history of Arizona—the militia, Arizona National Guard, and the military service of Arizonans. The museum displays uniforms, weapons, and artifacts of Arizonans' military service from the Conquistador, Spanish Colonial, Territorial Arizona, Indian Wars, Spanish-American, Mexican Border, WWI and II, Korea, Vietnam, and the Global War on Terror eras.

Located in the historic "Old Arsenal Building" built in 1936-37 (on Historic Registry) in Phoenix, Arizona, the museum has 6,500 square feet for displays with 3,300 square feet display for a Vietnam War room. *The Courier*, its official publication, is distributed to Historical Society members with issues posted on line on the National Guard website <<http://www.azdema.gov/museum>>.

The museum is an all-volunteer, nonprofit association, and an official activity of the Arizona National Guard through a memorandum of understanding. It is recognized for its civic engagement, exhibit displays, and narratives by the Center of Military History, Daughters of American Revolution, Arizona Historical Society, Museums Association of Arizona, Central Arizona Museum Association, and Phoenix New Times. It is an official Partner of the Department of Defense Commemoration of the Vietnam War Project and an Official Arizona Centennial Legacy Project.

The museum impacts the military/veterans community, their families, and visitors to metropolitan Phoenix at patriotic holidays and veterans' events.

Museum hours: 1-4 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays.

ARIZONA NATIONAL GUARD HISTORICAL SOCIETY COURIER

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Report to the Membership

Members and Friends:

Since our last publication a year ago, many exciting things have occurred for your museum. We have conducted numerous special tours for schools, retirement homes, veterans groups as well as for the general public who visit the museum on the weekends.

Last May 10, several of our Board members attended a workshop sponsored by the Arizona Historical Society at Pioneer Arizona to enhance their knowledge of museum operations and procedures. As usual, it was enlightening. On May 24, the Arizona Military Museum and the Heard Museum co-hosted a dinner at the Heard honoring Arizona's Native-American Vietnam veterans. Colonel Joey Strickland, USA (Ret) was the guest speaker.

During the month of June, I had the privilege to address groups such as Korean War veterans, Daughters of the American Revolution, and Vietnam Veterans of America about the museum and the service of Vietnam veterans. These talks are part of our community engagement.

On July 10, our museum and the Capitol museum co-hosted Francis Gary Powers, Jr. who gave an interesting presentation about his father and his father's book. On August 8, EANGUS had its national convention in Phoenix, and the museum had an informative historical display on Arizona's military history.

October 4, the museum co-hosted with the Arizona Department of Veterans Services an event honoring Arizona's Vietnam veterans. LTG Mick Kicklighter, Director of the Commemoration project, Colonel Jack Jacobs, USA (Ret), MG Michael McGuire (Adjutant General), Wendy-Smith Reeve (Emergency Management Director), and Ted Vogt, Director of Arizona Department of Veterans Services, were among the dignitaries who attended. The next event will be October 31, 2015. In October and November, our museum held an art exhibition relating to the Vietnam War. Some of this fine art was exhibited at the October 4 dinner.

On December 9, I addressed a group of about 25 WWII veterans about our museum and the Vietnam War. I have also addressed members of the Arizona National Guard on Arizona history. On February 3, museum Board members attended the Arizona Arts Congress and visited key legislators to advocate support for the arts.

The purpose of the various contacts outside the museum is to inform the public about Arizona's best kept secret—our museum. As a result, we have more visitors and have won numerous awards.

The Arizona National Guard has been very supportive of the museum's activities, and it is refurbishing historic military vehicles to be displayed adjacent to the museum. It is also installing a new electronic security system in the museum.

We appreciate all the support from the public, our museum colleagues, and the Arizona National Guard, and we hope to continue to provide you a first rate museum operated solely by unpaid volunteers.

Come and bring friends to visit the Arizona Military Museum.

Colonel Joe, Director

Why Not Honor Vietnam Veterans?

Editorial by Colonel Joseph E. Abodeely

Director, Arizona Military Museum

A piece in *Truthout* dated October 16, 2014 written by Marjorie Cohn is entitled “US Government Sanitizes Vietnam War History”. Ms. Cohn claimed:

“Now the Pentagon is planning to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War by launching a \$30 million program to rewrite and sanitize its history. Replete with a [fancy interactive website](#), the effort is aimed at teaching schoolchildren a revisionist history of the war. The program is focused on honoring our service members who fought in Vietnam. But conspicuously absent from the website is a description of the antiwar movement, at the heart of which was the GI movement”.

Ms. Cohn renewed the old “spin” misrepresentations that the anti-war protestors, politicians, and media did a half a century ago about the reasons, conduct and service of US veterans in the Vietnam War. The commemoration of the Vietnam War (as it is properly called) does NOT have as its purpose to re-write and sanitize history as she claimed nor does its website aim to teach a revisionist history of the war. Its main purpose is to thank and honor veterans of the Vietnam War.

LTG Mick Kicklighter who heads the Commemoration program got his marching orders from Congress to include activities and ceremonies to achieve the following objectives to present the true history:

1. To thank and honor veterans of the Vietnam War, including personnel who were held as prisoners of war (POW), or listed as missing in action (MIA), for their service and sacrifice on behalf of the United States and to thank and honor the families of these veterans.
2. To highlight the service of the Armed Forces during the Vietnam War and the contributions of Federal agencies and governmental and non-governmental organizations that served with, or in support of, the Armed Forces.
3. To pay tribute to the contributions made on the home front by the people of the United States during the Vietnam War.
4. To highlight the advances in technology, science, and medicine related to military research conducted during the Vietnam War.
5. To recognize the contributions and sacrifices made by the allies of the United States during the Vietnam War.

Who can legitimately disagree with those objectives to honor Vietnam veterans?

Ms. Cohn claimed that over 500,000 soldiers deserted during the course of the war and that GIs were part of the anti-war movement. She equated the massive protests of the anti-war crowd with the service and sacrifices of the Vietnam War veterans who honorably served and are proud of their service. Simply because the media promoted the anti-war movement about Vietnam (as it promoted the pro-war movement about Iraq) does not make

the movements legitimate or just, neither does the fact that one served in Vietnam validate his anti-war protests. Although 2/3 of those who served volunteered, the 1/3 that was drafted was a “mixed bag” (e.g., Project 100,000). Project 100,000 was a controversial plan to provide remedial training to recruits who could not pass the military’s physical or written aptitude tests. This program was created for two reasons: first to provide men from disadvantaged backgrounds with the training needed for them to succeed in the military and later in civilian life; second to provide more troops for the military to relieve the pressures of the draft quotas. In 1966, 40,000 men were brought into the military with a goal set of 100,000 men per year after that.

Over 9,000,000 (nine million) served on active duty during the Vietnam War era. If 500,000 soldiers deserted—that is a very small percentage of the over 9,000,000 who served during the war. Cohn apparently thinks the deserters were heroes.

To further support her theme, she cites the My Lai incident referred to in the Vietnam War Commemoration timeline. My Lai was an aberration. Cohn wanted the word “massacre” to be used. Bad things can happen during a 10 year-long war.

“In 1968, US soldiers slaughtered 500 unarmed old men, women and children in the Vietnamese village of My Lai. Yet the Pentagon website refers only to the “My Lai Incident,” despite the fact that it is customarily referred to as a massacre”.

Incidents like My Lai were NOT common. My Lai was outrageous and an aberration, but it was no worse than Dresden or the fire-bombing of Tokyo or the “Shock and Awe” in Iraq or the recent Israeli invasion of Gaza—none of which are referred to as a “massacre”. Nobody condones the My Lai “incident”—but it does not define the war unless one has an agenda to have it do so.

Regarding those Indochinese who died in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, the anti-war protestors of the 1960s caused much suffering. Tragically, when they finally got their way and the Communists seized power throughout the former French Indochina, more people were killed in the first three years following “liberation” than died in combat during the previous fourteen years throughout Indochina. As the Yale Cambodian Genocide Program has documented, more than twenty-percent of the people of that peaceful country were killed by Pol Pot and his *Khmer Rouge* henchmen, or roughly 1.7 million people. Ms. Cohn is silent about this.

In a January 2003 story on the Cambodian “killing fields,” *National Geographic Today* noted that—to save bullets—small children were simply picked up and smashed against trees until they stopped quivering. During the same time period in the former South Vietnam, hundreds of thousands of others died from executions or in “reeducation camps” and “new economic zones”—or as “boat people” trying desperately to flee the tyranny the American Congress imposed upon their country. That’s part of the legacy of the American “peace” movement that Ms. Cohn wants to honor.

Ms. Cohn decried the “evils” of Agent Orange, dioxin, used by the military to defoliate areas used by the enemy to hide, travel, or position weapons. She cited the various health issues for the veterans and their families that occurred which is an unfortunate collateral result of its use. But this is not grounds to defame those who honorably served in the war. Neither My Lai nor Agent Orange should define the Vietnam War which lasted 10 years or the service of all of those who served.

The Vietnam War should be defined by patriotic Americans serving their country going to a foreign land to fight for the freedom of the South Vietnamese and to prevent Communist expansionism. They served exceptionally well, their Congress gave up what the Vietnam veterans had won thereby causing the fall of South Vietnam, and the veterans were maligned for their service.

Here is what the war was about. In July 1954, the Geneva Accords partitioned Vietnam at the 17th parallel with the northern territory governed by Viet Minh (a Leninist-controlled front group with members in North and South Vietnam) and the South becoming the Republic of Vietnam in 1955. The 1954 Geneva Accords also required elections to be held if the Viet Minh returned to the North and allowed free elections. The Viet Minh did not comply. There was still intimidation and terrorism by the Viet Minh on the populace in the South. There could not be free and fair elections as long as Viet Minh operatives were still in the South. Hanoi had the largest population and had refused to agree to UN supervision.

In September 1954 the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) was signed in Manila, Philippines. It was an international organization for collective defense in Southeast Asia created by the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty, or Manila Pact which had concerns about Communist expansion throughout all of Southeast Asia—the “Domino” theory. SEATO made U.S. involvement in Vietnam LEGAL.

Hanoi repeatedly published books and articles bragging about the fact that the Lao Dong Party had made a decision in 1959 to overthrow the government of South Vietnam by armed force, and to that end opened the Ho Chi Minh Trail and began sending tons of equipment, supplies, and troops through Laos and Cambodia into South Vietnam. The University of Kansas Press has published a translation of Hanoi’s official history of the war under the title *Victory in Vietnam*, and it leaves no doubt about Hanoi’s role in starting, controlling, and fighting the war. Put simply, Hanoi has (repeatedly) admitted that it began an armed campaign to overthrow another sovereign state more than five years before Congress authorized the use of American combat units to defend South Vietnam.

Three months before Hanoi announced the formation of the National Liberation Front, it held the Third Party Congress and then published a multi-volume proceedings of the Congress in English—and even mailed copies to many American university libraries. Volume I clearly notes that the Party passed a resolution that it was time for “our people” in the south to set up a “national united front” (an old Leninist tactic) in South Vietnam under the leadership of a Marxist-Leninist party. If anyone bothered to compare Hanoi’s English-language translation of the 1967 NLF Program with Hanoi’s English translation of

the program of the 1955 Fatherland Front in Hanoi, they would have realized that entire paragraphs were verbatim. The NFL flag, which was a direct copy of Hanoi's flag except for adding some blue to the background. Communism was a serious threat.

On January 20, 1961 John Kennedy was inaugurated as President, and he declared "...we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, and oppose any foe to insure the survival and the success of liberty". Privately, outgoing President Dwight Eisenhower, told Kennedy, "I think you're going to have to send troops..." to Southeast Asia. Due to the United States government's Cold War-era policy to prevent the spread of Communism abroad, economic aid and were sent to aid South Vietnam.

In the early 1960s, the U.S. presence in Vietnam escalated with over 16,000 military advisors and a tripling of the financial support. Insurgent speed boats attacked two U.S. destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin, and in August 1964, Congress enacted the Southeast Asian Resolution by a combined vote of 504-2. SEATO was U.S. legal justification to aid the Republic of Vietnam.

In December 1972, after several years of hard fought warfare, massive U.S. bombing of North Vietnam compelled North Vietnam to sign the Paris Peace accords in January 1973 ending the war. But in May, Congress ceased all funding to South Vietnam. The US and its allies won the war then--it got its POWs returned—and rights for the South Vietnamese were established. US troops came home in 1973, and it promised to replace any logistical supplies the South needed if the North attacked again.

In June 1974, President Nixon was involved in the Watergate scandal and resigned from office. In November 1974, it was a Democratic landslide in Congress. Many of these Congressmen were part of the "anti-war movement". In 1974 Congress cut off all funding to support South Vietnam in violation of their promise and threw away what the America Vietnam veterans had won. Two years after the vast majority of U.S. military left Vietnam in 1973 and Congress cut off logistical support, Saigon was overrun by the North Vietnamese Army on April 30, 1975.

Ms. Cohn opined that the Commemoration is to provide cover for recent and future U.S. military operations. She cited Tom Hayden (Mr. Jane Fonda), Daniel Ellsberg (Pentagon Papers), and others who want to create an alternate "commemoration" to honor the anti-Vietnam War protestors. She thinks they are "heroes". They aren't.

All wars are political, and Vietnam was no different. But the media influenced the Vietnam War as it did the Iraq war with "embedded" journalists reporting the war. Vietnam was no worse than any other war America has engaged in. Honor the Vietnam veterans. They deserve your respect and appreciation for their service. They are the true heroes.

PADDY GRAYDON'S MULE-POWERED GUIDED MISSILE

By Marshall Trimble

History tells us the first guided missile, a self-propelled weapon system, was developed by German scientists during World War II but historians seem to have overlooked the story of the Irishman, Captain James “Paddy” Graydon and his mule-powered guided missiles during the Battle of Valverde in 1862.

Paddy was born in a little Irish village in 1832. He migrated to America during the “Great Hunger” when he was a young man and like many struggling Irish immigrants he joined the U.S. Army. In 1853 he was assigned to the First Dragoons, the Army’s first cavalry regiment. Paddy arrived with the new recruits in Santa Fe in August 1853. His commanding officer was Captain Richard Ewell, a battle-toughened Mexican War veteran, known to his friends as “Old Bald Head,” because his hair line had receded all the way to the back of his neck. Less than a decade later he would be a Confederate general serving under Stonewall Jackson and Robert E. Lee.

Dragoons were mounted infantry, in other words, horsemen also trained as infantry. Congress created the United States Mounted Rangers in 1832 to protect the traders along Santa Fe Trail and control the eastern tribes that were being moved west to Oklahoma. My great-great grandfather, Sergeant Moffett Trimble was a sergeant in one of those six companies, the Arkansas Mounted Rangers. These were made up of volunteers on the frontier and suffered from a lack of organization and discipline so a year later the secretary of war created the United States Regiment of Dragoons made up of ten companies of regular army troops called dragoons and modeled after the mounted units in the Revolutionary War. A second regiment was established in 1836. Just prior to the Civil War the name was changed to “cavalry.” The name change wasn’t popular with the dragoons and many continued to wear the orange braid until their uniforms wore out and were replaced by yellow.

During the early to mid-1850s Paddy campaigned with the dragoons against the Mescalero Apache, the Mimbres Apache and the Navajo.

The First Dragoons rode into Tucson in November 1856, the first military unit to arrive in the new Gadsden Purchase. By this time Paddy was a seasoned veteran. Captain Ewell decided to locate the first military post in the area, Fort Buchanan, on the banks of Sonoita Creek. Paddy and the dragoons chased Mexican border bandits, campaigned against Chiricahua and Western Apache raiders and kept the peace in the wild and wooly border country.

He decided to leave the Army in 1858 but remained in the area and start his own little business. He opened a hotel of whitewashed adobe he called the Casa

Blanca that included a saloon that never closed. Paddy provided his rough and tumble guests everything from “good time girls” and all-night poker games to good food and an occasional gunfight.

Paddy was a natural leader and soon became the *alcalde* or magistrate presiding over local disputes. He continued to guide the Dragoons on expeditions against marauders ranging from horse thieves to murderers and raiders.

When the Civil War broke out in 1861 the military abandoned all the posts and withdrew the troops. Paddy headed for Santa Fe and volunteered to fight for the Union. The Confederacy had a grand scheme to annex other parts of the West, use its western mines to fill its cash-strapped treasury and make the South an ocean to ocean power.

In July 1861 Colonel John Baylor and his 300-man Texas Brigade advanced into New Mexico. Then in late January 1862, General Henry Hopkins Sibley and his 3,700-man Texas army invaded New Mexico and advanced up the Rio Grande.

Meanwhile, Paddy was commissioned a captain by the territorial governor and charged with recruiting a company of scouts who would operate independently and report on General Sibley’s movements.

Paddy’s outfit was unique in the annals of warfare, or at least so it appeared. The record shows he made it through the Civil War without the loss of a single man either by death or desertion. When a man turned up missing he simply “drafted” the next unfortunate man he happened upon addressing him by the name of the missing person. Paddy’s roster was always at full company strength.

On the evening of February 20th, 1862, just before the main Battle of Valverde, Paddy dreamed up a scheme that should qualify him as one of the pioneers in the tactical use of guided missiles. The technology was primitive but the concept was the same. He proposed to take two faithful but old worn out Union Army mules that were on their last legs and load them with explosives and lead them across the Rio Grande to the outskirts of the Rebel camp. The mules would walk into the camp; the explosion that followed would create havoc among the Johnny Rebs.

The plan was approved and soon Paddy and four of his scouts along with the explosive-laden mules were fording the river and making their way through the mesquite towards the Rebel camp. When they were close he lit the fuses, pointed them in the right direction and slapped them on their rumps. He naturally assumed the mules would see their counterparts on the Confederate side and rush to join them. His assumptions would prove to be wrong. Those faithful Union Army mules had no intention of deserting Paddy.

As they were making their way through the brush back to the river they heard the sound of hooves behind them. Horrors! Somebody forgot to include the mules in the plan to blow up the Rebels. They didn’t know they were the designated suicide bombers. Besides, they’d become fond of Paddy and doing their best to

keep up with the Irishman. The fuses were getting shorter and so was Paddy's time. Suddenly the sky lit up like the Fourth of July and the loyal Union mules went up in a blaze of glory.

Paddy's plan wasn't all for naught. He did succeed in robbing the Johnny Rebs of a good night's sleep and the blast managed to stampede their cattle herd.

The Battle of Valverde began the next morning and the two armies fought the entire day before the Union forces retired at sundown. The bloody battle produced heavy casualties but had no decisive result. The Yanks retreated to Fort Craig and the Confederates headed up the Rio Grande taking Albuquerque and Santa Fe. Sibley's army met its "Waterloo" a few weeks later in the three-day Battle of Glorieta Pass when they were defeated by a combined force of Colorado volunteers and the Union. Following the so-called "Gettysburg of the West" the Rebs retreated back down the Rio Grande and back to Texas. Thus ended the Confederate dream of having an empire in the Far West.

Paddy Graydon and his jolly band of rogues continued to be a burr under General Sibley's saddle. They performed valiantly at Valverde and in northern New Mexico. During the Rebel retreat they continued to shadow and harass the Confederate retreat all the way back to Texas.

Despite his heroics on the field of battle, James "Paddy" Graydon is forever ingrained in western folklore for his flawed scheme to turn a couple of old army mules into guided missiles.



Not the original mules

Burton Barr Central Library Museum Exhibit

During the first week of November through the first week in December the Arizona Military Museum displayed artifacts, photographs, replica weapons, and accoutrements to celebrate Veterans' Day on the second floor reading area of the Burton Barr Central Library in downtown Phoenix. This was excellent exposure for our museum, and there were many positive reviews from library attendees.



Fourth Annual Dinner in Honor of Arizona Viet Nam Veterans

The Arizona Military Museum and the Arizona Department of Veterans Services co-hosted the 4th Annual Commemoration of the Vietnam War event on Saturday, October 4, 2014 at the Scottsdale Plaza Resort in Scottsdale, Arizona. The event was in conjunction with the DoD Commemoration of the Vietnam War Project.



Cocktail Party



Vietnam Color Guard



DK Orchestra



Col. Joe Abodeely



Ted Vogt

Prior to the dinner, attendees gathered in the elegant Fourier of the Scottsdale Plaza Resort to enjoy libations and camaraderie. The even opened with the presentation and the posting of the U.S. and South Vietnamese colors by the Vietnamese Color Guard led by Colonel Vu Dam. Both the Vietnamese and American National Anthems were played by the DK Orchestra Ensemble. Brother Tim Tomczak, O.S.C.. Crosier Fathers and Brothers, gave a special prayer for the occasion.

The Master of Ceremonies was Colonel Joseph E. Abodeely, USA (Ret.), museum Director, who welcomed all the dignitaries, special guests and attendees. Ted Vogt, Director, Arizona Department of Veterans Services, gave a moving welcome and speech honoring Vietnam veterans. Lieutenant General Mick Kicklighter, USA (Ret.), Director, Commemoration of the Vietnam War, presented information and updates about the commemoration. Members of his staff were in attendance to provide information and mementos relating to the Commemoration project.



LTG Mick Kicklighter



MG McGuire and Debbie



Col. Jack Jacobs



Nurse Pat Little-Upah



Cols. Joe and Jack

After dinner, the program included a video presentation about the Viet Nam war, a toast to KIAs and MIAs, and SFC Vern G. West USA (Ret.) played taps. Col. Jack Jacobs, USA (Ret.), Medal of Honor recipient and keynote speaker shared his experiences and life as a businessman, lecturer at the US Military Academy, author, and on-air analyst for NBC News. His presentation was informative, entertaining, and very well received.

Several dignitaries and elected officials were in attendance including MG Michael McGuire (Adjutant General), Wendy- Smith Reeve (Emergency Services Director), and BG William Hall (Land Component Commander). The evening concluded with the playing of the military service songs for each of the military services. LTG Kicklighter and Colonel Jacobs made a special recognition and presentation of a custom challenge coin to the Vietnam veterans.

Ia Drang Battle

(Per internet)

In the first major engagement of the war between regular U.S. and North Vietnamese forces, elements of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) fight a pitched battle with Communist main-force units in the Ia Drang Valley of the Central Highlands. The 1st Cavalry division, or the 1st Air Cav, as was often called, was the first airmobile division of the U.S. Army. Its troops and equipment were transported on the battlefield primarily by helicopter. The Air Cav “troopers” air assaulted into battle from helicopters often with fire support from its own artillery brought into position by helicopters.

On this morning, Lt. Col. Harold G. Moore's 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry conducted an air assault by helicopter into Landing Zone X-Ray near the Chu Pong hills. Around noon, the North Vietnamese 33rd Regiment attacked the U.S. troopers. The fight continued all day and into the night. American soldiers received support from nearby artillery units and tactical air strikes. The next morning, the North Vietnamese 66th Regiment joined the attack against the U.S. unit. The fighting was bitter, but the tactical air strikes and artillery support took their toll on the enemy and enabled the 1st Cavalry troopers to hold on against repeated assaults.



Air Cavalry troopers dismounting UH-1 helicopters to conduct search and destroy

At around noon, two reinforcing companies arrived and Colonel Moore put them to good use to support his beleaguered soldiers. By the third day of the battle, the Americans had gained the upper hand. The three-day battle resulted in 834 North Vietnamese soldiers confirmed killed, and another 1,000 communist casualties were assumed.

In a related action during the same battle, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, was ambushed by North Vietnamese forces as it moved overland to Landing Zone Albany. Of the 500 men in the original column, 150 were killed and only 84 were able to return to immediate duty; Company C suffered 93 percent casualties, half of them deaths.



Senior American officials in Saigon declared the Battle of the Ia Drang Valley a great victory. The battle was extremely important because it was the first significant contact between U.S. troops and North Vietnamese forces. It validated the “airmobile” concept implemented by the 1st Cavalry—the airmobile division, but the action demonstrated that the North Vietnamese were prepared to stand and fight major battles even though they might take serious casualties.

Senior American military leaders concluded that U.S. forces could wreak significant damage on the communists in such battles, and this tactic lead to a war of attrition by the U.S. forces against the communists. The North Vietnamese also learned that by keeping their combat troops physically close to U.S. positions, U.S. troops could not use artillery or air strikes without risking injury to American troops.

The extensive U.S. bombing of North Vietnam forced the Communists to sign a peace treaty in 1973 ending U.S. involvement in the war. In May 1973, the U.S. Congress also voted to end logistical support to South Vietnam, and two years later the North overwhelmed the South who actually ran out of ammunition on the battlefield.

The Wham Paymaster Robbery

By Jim Turner, www.jimturnerhistorian.org

On May 11th, 1889, Army paymaster Major Joseph Washington Wham (rhymes with bomb) and his military escort of black soldiers were attacked by about a dozen bandits near Safford, Arizona. The soldiers suffered numerous bullet wounds, but justice was never served.

[Author's Note: the majority of information in this article comes from *Ambush at Bloody Run*, by Professor Larry D. Ball.]

This was Arizona's only payroll robbery, and conditions were right for it. For the most part the small, scattered, remote eastern Arizonans disliked the federal government, feeling that it had no interest in the territory's wellbeing. Also, there were a number of former Confederates and sympathizers with prejudices against black soldiers and soldiers in blue in general. Since President Buchanan sent U.S. troops to Utah in what was called the Mormon War, there were also decades of hostilities between members of the Church of Latter Day Saints (Mormons) and the federal government. In *Mormon Settlement in Arizona: A Record of Peaceful Conquest of the Desert*, Arizona historian James H. McClintock said "In the way of outlawry, the [Sulphur Springs] valley had unwelcome notoriety when from its rougher element was constituted a band which, May 11, 1889, ambushed Paymaster J.W. Wham of the United States army."

The payroll, mostly gold and silver coin, amounted to more than \$28,000 (about \$744,000 in today's money). Major Wham arrived at Fort Grant on May 10th and picked up black soldiers from the 24th Infantry and two from the 10th Cavalry.



Fort Grant

Most of them were seasoned troops. Wham rode in a covered ambulance and the soldiers and payroll traveled in an open wagon. Sergeant Benjamin Brown and Corporal Isaiah Mays

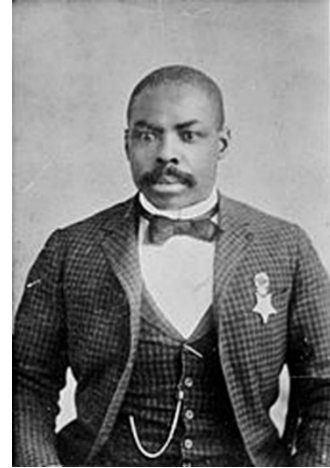
were armed with .38 revolvers, and the infantrymen carried single shot Springfield 45-70 rifles and carbines.



Major Wham



Sergeant Benjamin Brown



Corporal Isaiah Mays

The Lead up to the Fight

Shortly after midday May 11th, 1889, the escort moved along the Fort Grant to Fort Thomas road, about fifteen miles west of the town of Pima in Graham County, Arizona. The road entered Eagle Pass about twenty-five miles north of Fort Grant. They began to climb into the pass three miles beyond Cedar Springs.

About 1 p.m., the soldiers noticed that the major's ambulance had come to an abrupt stop. At first it seemed that a boulder had accidentally blocked the road, but it was soon obvious that smaller stones had been wedged under it to keep it in place. One soldier later told a reporter that this discovery made "the cold creep up on his back."

The Robbery

As the men tried to move the rock, a shot was fired nearby as a signal, followed by fifteen or twenty others from the guns of at least a dozen robbers from the steep rocky slope on the east side of the road. According to Frank N. Schubert in ***Black Valor: Black Soldiers and the Medal of Honor***, the outlaws were "firing from six well-constructed and carefully selected stone emplacements with clear lines of fire."



The black soldiers were caught with very little cover and made a brave stand for about thirty minutes. Within that time, eight soldiers were hit. Sgt. Brown was wounded twice, including a severe shot to his abdomen. Corporal Isaiah Mays crawled, and then ran, two miles for reinforcements.

Meanwhile, Major Wham jumped out of the ambulance and ran behind a four-foot ledge of rocks on the west side of the road. A number of the soldiers gathered there. Private Lewis tumbled out of the ambulance seat with a bullet through his abdomen but managed to crawl off the road.

The soldiers were handicapped by their single shot 45-70s, since some of the highwaymen had repeating rifles, and they could reload in safety while others kept up the barrage. The bandits' unusual conduct made some eyewitnesses believe they could be young cowboys. They didn't wear masks, and seemed oblivious to danger as they leapt from place to place in plain view. One of them walked out into the open and coolly fired at the soldiers.

After about half an hour, Wham ordered his troops to withdraw to safety, but they kept firing as they went. Once the soldiers retreated, the robbers broke into the strong box, took the money, and fled.

The Arrests

Since federal money was stolen, U.S. Marshal William Kidder Meade was put in charge of the case. Eventually seven men were handed over to a grand jury in Tucson. All but two were members of the Mormon Church, or relatives of members in good standing.

Because they didn't wear masks and one had a pronounced limp, the alleged bandits were recognized as local ranchers. They included Gilbert Webb and his son Wilfred, Mark Cunningham, Lyman and Warren Follett, William Ellison Beck, alias "Cyclone Bill," David Rogers, Thomas N. Lamb, and Siebert Anderson. Except for Cyclone Bill and Cunningham, all were residents of local Mormon communities.

Despite their recognition, locals believed that the black soldiers' testimony would not be taken seriously. Marshal Meade then got corroboration from local residents that Gilbert Webb began paying off debts in gold right after the robbery. D. W. Doc Colvin, whose father testified at the trial, said that the defendants had money all of a sudden, when before they were broke.

The defendants hired several prominent attorneys, and on June 3rd a pair of surprise witnesses swore that Beck was at their ranch 150 miles away at the time of the robbery. The defense's case rested on discrediting prosecution witnesses and providing more than fifty witnesses with alibis for their clients' whereabouts at the time of the robbery. Even with this lengthy defense, the ***Arizona Daily Star*** and many Tucson citizens were surprised when the court convened at 2 p.m. on December 14th and the jury was out less than two hours before reading the not guilty verdict for all accused.

However, in spite of attempts by the defense to impugn the character and courage of Major Wham and his men, testimony proved that their stalwart defense of Army property in the face of heavy gunfire was an act of true valor. Corporal Isaiah Mays was awarded the Medal of Honor for "Gallantry in the fight between Paymaster Wham's escort and robbers. Mays walked and crawled 2 miles to a ranch for help." Sgt. Benjamin Brown also received the Medal of Honor and the reason given: "Although shot in the abdomen, in a fight between a paymaster's escort and robbers, did not leave the field until again wounded through both arms."

For the complete story, see Professor Larry Ball's award-winning book, ***Ambush at Bloody Run: The Wham Paymaster Robbery of 1889 – a Story of Politics, Religion, Race, and Banditry in Arizona Territory.***



Medal of Honor



Professor Larry Ball's award-winning book

The EANGUS National Convention

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) National Convention was held at the Phoenix Convention Center August 2014. Business sessions and exhibitors and National Guard attendees packed the Phoenix Convention Center. The Arizona Military Museum was pleased to display an exhibit highlighting Arizona's colorful military history. Pictured are Colonel Joe, and Mary and Harry Hensell. Harry and Mary have been involved in EANGUS for years.



Arizona Military Museum exhibition

“Lest We Forget”



Doris Jeanette McColgin

Jeanette McColgin, 90, passed away on Thursday January 29th, 2015. She was a member of the Arizona National Guard Historical Society (Arizona Military Museum) Board of Directors many years. She was always ready to help and was such an inspiration to the younger generation who associated with her. Jean was born April 30, 1924 in Kokomo. A graduate of Kokomo High School, she served as a nurse at Westwood Medical Clinic for 30 years until retiring. Jean was very active in her church and through her volunteer work with

various organizations, she made lifelong friends in Mesa and the Valley as she cooked many years for Paz de Cristo to serve the homeless. She was awarded the Hon Kachina Volunteer Award (the most prestigious volunteer award given in the State of Arizona) for her work with Paz de Cristo. She was a compassionate, generous, loving wife, mother, grandmother, great grandmother, and friend. Jean's sense of humor and drive to get the job done will be dearly missed by all who knew her or benefited from her charity work she loved so much. We all will miss her very, very much.

Pericles

Pericles was a famous ancient Greek general, statesman, and philosopher. Pericles, born c. 495 BC in Athens, Greece became a great patron of the arts. In 461 BC, he assumed rule of Athens—a role he would occupy until his death. During his leadership, he built the Acropolis and Parthenon and led Athens' recapture of Delphi, the siege on Samos and the invasion of Megara. In 429 BC, he died of the plague. One of his sayings seems appropriate here:

What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others.

Thank You

\$250.00 Life Membership	Mike Snozek
\$250.00 Donation	Ed Hughes Trust, aria Hughes, Trustee
\$1000.00 Donation	Gene Cox

MUSEUM LOCATION AND HOURS

The Arizona Military Museum is located on the northeast corner of 52nd Street and McDowell Road. Enter at the main entrance at 5600 East McDowell. The admission is FREE. The museum is open on Saturdays and on Sundays from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Our Historical Society Board members “man” the museum. Since our officers and directors are volunteers, the museum hours are related to their (volunteers’) availability. Please call the museum to schedule tours beforehand to insure we’re not closed for holidays or the summer or for some other reason. The museum number is 602-267-2676.

A FEW GOOD MEN AND WOMEN

You can help by becoming a member of, or recruiting for, the Arizona National Guard Historical Society, by making a tax-deductible donation, by making the Historical Society a beneficiary in your will, or by donating historical artifacts.

Museum Awards



Dues are Due Now!
Annual Membership is \$25.00
Life Membership is \$250.00

Make check payable to Arizona Military Museum and send check to:

**Arizona Military Museum
5636 East McDowell
Phoenix, Arizona 85008**